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ABSTRACT

Through its symbolism, law, and toponyms, the Bible exerts a strong influence on Western society. Consequently, geography of the Bible--a study of how people responded to God in such a geographic setting and how people responded to the challenge of an adverse environment--constitutes a legitimate academic field. Such a study has the specific benefits of clarifying and bringing reality and variety to Bible studies. Methodology for such a course relies on the same framework as other geographies. It may be studied systematically as well as chorographically, and idiographically or nomothetically. Recent research has indicated several directions tor innovation in the field of geography of the Bible, including geographic interpretation of Bible passages, identification of biblical sites, clarification of Bible translations, and biblical cartography. A final research frontier focuses on using the Bible to explore solutions to present political problems in the Middle East. A biblical perspective can add insight into the examination of peace and land rights. (LP)

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INTRODUCTION

Despite separation of religion and politics and the trend toward secularization, the Bible, the source and foundation of Judeo-Christian faith, remains a strong influence force in the Western Society, especially in the United States. The influence is seen not only in biblical symbolism that dots the landscape, but also in the law of the land,[1] as well as in the toponyms of American towns and cities.[2]

Unfortunately, many of these place names of biblical origin, such as Jerusalem (AR), Jericho (NY), Bethlehem (CT), Nazareth (KY), Bethesda (MD), or Mt. Zion (IA), have merely become symbolism. Average town people in these communities probably do not think much about the significance of these "sacred" places of biblical origin. The average Bible reader, too, probably has only the slightest idea concerning the where about of these places despite the fact that these were real places in which biblical events took place--some of these even have a continuous existence down to the present--in a geographic region variously known as Palestine, Eretz Israel, the Holy Land, or the Land of the Bible.

The Bible, to some, is a book; to the others, is the Book; to still many others, it is a set of doctrines, a set of religious beliefs, which manifests itself specifically in the forms of worship and/or in the architectural style of church buildings as they dot the human landscape. The Bible, thus, may be treated as a subset of religion which is a subject in human or cultural geography, namely, the Geography of Religion.

Looking at the mutual relationship between religion and environment [geography], Paul Fickeler, a German free-lance scholar and writer, once raised two pertinent questions: (1) How does the environment, including the people, the landscape, and the country, affect a religious form? and, (2) How does a religious form affect a people, landscape, and country?[3]

These two questions are also pertinent with respect to the mutual relationship between the Bible and the Bible Land. On the one hand, there are evidences of geographic effects in the writing of the Bible; on the other hand, there are also evidences of the effects of the Bible on the life of the people and the landscape which they created in the Land of the Bible.

The Bible has two Testaments: the Old and the New. The Old Testament is about a people and the New Testament is about a person. The people began with the call of Abraham out of Ur in the land of the Chaledeans, followed by the sojourn of the Patriarchs in the Land of Canaan, the migration of the Hebrews to Goshen, the propagation of "the Twelve Tribes" in the Nile Delta, the exodus of the "Children of Israel" from Egypt, the wandering of "the rebellious" in the midbars of Sinai, and the final entry of the "Chosen People" into the "Promised Land." In all of these, there existed an intricate relationship between the people and the lands in which they visited. This man/land relationship is very dear to the heart of the geographer.

The person of the New Testament is Jesus of Nazareth, the Emmanuel. He was born in Bethlehem, exiled in Egypt to escape the onslaught of Herod the Great, and was later raised in Nazareth. He "went about doing good"--in the Judean Hills, at the Samaritan well, on the Galilean shores, and in "the land beyond." He drew many examples for his teaching from the landscape familiar to himself: not only flowers in the fields, birds in the air, animals in the wilderness; but also those back-bending chores on the farms, and night

toiling activities over the Sea of Galilee. His itineraries and the stopping places of his ministry, were emotionally attached to many of his followers, and they eventually become "Holy Places." As one looks at these places, one cannot escape the impression of the effect of these New Testament events on the landscape and in the life of its people.

The Old Testament was first revealed to the Hebrews in the wilderness, and the New Testament was later revealed to both the Jews and the Gentiles of the early ekklesia (the church) in the Greco-Roman world. In order for the "Children", as well as for the "Christianos" to easily understand his holy oracles concerning certain truths in life, or about certain facts of life, the Divine Author of the Bible often allegorically incorporated in this sacred writing familiar geographic phenomena that these people could fully appreciate. These allegories, being drawn from the background of local origin in the Bible Land, often are not readily comprehensible to people who live outside Palestine, under an entirely different geographic setting.

One of these allegories may be found in Job 6:15 where we read: "My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook . . ." (KJV). Here, the Bible allegorically likens a deceitful brother with a brook. Most of us who live in this part of the world can only visualize a brook as a tiny creek or a small stream in a luscious meadow or in a woods. It is simply beautiful: poetic, if not romantic. How can one understand the linkage of such a nice scene with a deceitful brother? One translation of the Bible renders the word as "wadi" instead of "brook."[4] This is a correct translation. But what is a "wadi"? The word "wadi" or "waddy" is of Arabic origin,[5] referring to any river channels in the Arab world of which Palestine was a part. But most of the "rivers" in Palestine are dry most of the times. To the people who are not familiar with this region, wadis may appear as avenues

amidst the rugged desert terrain. Nevertheless, outbursts of heavy rains may occur in any place at any time. When this happens, freshets may roar down the wadi in a lightning-like manner, catching a visiting stranger unprepared. It is with this treacherous and unreliable nature of the wadi that a deceitful brother was compared in the Bible.

Another example may be cited from the New Testament. James 5:7,8 reads: "But be patient, my brothers, as you wait for the Lord to come. Look at the farmer quietly awaiting his precious harvest. See how he has to possess his soul in patience till the land has had the early and late rains. So must you be patient, resting your hearts on the ultimate certainty. The Lord's coming is very near."[6] The main matter of concern in these two verses is waiting for the Lord to return. This, Christians over the centuries have been doing ever since the beginning of the Christian Era--and He is still yet to come. Any awaiting of such a long duration requires a tremendous amount of patience. Here in this passage, James likens the waiting for the coming of the Lord with "the farmer quietly awaiting his precious harvest." The harvest indeed is precious, but it could not be had without first the coming of "the early and late rains."

In Palestine, the "early rain" comes in late October to early November, and sometimes, even till Christmas. After a long dry summer which is typical to the Mediterranean region, the early rain is important for softening the parched ground, for ploughing, seeding, and germination. Without this early rain, planting would be impossible in the days of donkey power and wooden plows. The "late rain" comes to Palestine in April and May when the maturing grains are filling up the seeds. Without this, the harvest would be very poor if not impossible.

The seasonal arrival of these rains, therefore, is a matter of vital importance to the Palestinian farmers. For upon these rains hangs the feast or famine; life or death. But farmers in Palestine, like farmers anywhere, have absolutely no control over the coming of these rains. They must wait, and wait they must do in the manner of possessing their souls in patience. Few of us who live in this part of the world are conditioned to fully appreciate the intensity and the tremendous amount of patience that go along with this waiting for the arrival of the early and later rains by the Palestinian farmers.[7] Until we understand this, we are likely unable to fully appreciate the intensity of the patience that was required of the early Christians in their waiting for the return of the Lord, as James tried to encourage them.

These are but two of the many allegorical expressions in the Bible that require geographic knowledge to fully appreciate or understand. Other passages would require knowledge of geographic principles to interpret. Ecclesiastes 1:7 is one of these examples where one reads: "Every river flows into the sea, but the sea is not yet full. The water returns to where the rivers began, and starts all over again."[8]

Days and nights, rivers flow into the sea. Why the sea is not yet full? How does the water that flows into the sea return to where it began? The phenomenon and these questions cannot be fully understood and appreciated without the knowledge of a very basic principle in Geography and Hydrology, namely, the Hydrologic Cycle.[9]

From their tiny respective origin in the small creeks, these waters flow and join with each other in larger streams and big rivers before emptying into the wide open sea. Due to the constancy of evaporation that occurs over the water surface, the sea, naturally "is not yet full." Because the molecular weight of the evaporated "water" is lighter than that of the air, this causes

the water vapor to rise "above the firmament" (Gen. 1:7). The water that is in the air is carried over the continents by the atmospheric circulation. The rising and subsequent cooling cause the water that is in the air to condense and, eventually, to be precipitated as rains, sleets, or snow. These forms of precipitation, when fall upon the earth, they either become "run-offs" to be collected by creeks, streams, and rivers, or become ground water through infiltration and percolation. In any case, the water would eventually reach the sea again for another round of circulation through the hydrologic cycle.

The above discussions indicate two fundamental facts. First, there exists some interesting relationships between the writing of the Bible and the Lands of the Bible. Second, there exists a need for geographic knowledge of the Land as well as geographic principles to help better understanding some of these biblical passages--not for obtaining the salvation but for fuller appreciation of the Scripture.

Unfortunately, there were some misunderstanding of these relationships in the past. Even today, the average Bible reader tends to be <u>atopian</u>. That is to say, one often reads the Bible without any conception of the existence of the places in which biblical events occurred. As a result, the Bible becomes to them a fantasy literature--something that happened so long ago and so far away in a seemingly "imaginary" land. On the other hand, there were geographers who did not want anything to do with the Bible. They were afraid of being branded "unscientific" if they bring into Geography the element of God and the Theology-related Bible.

But the field of the Geography of the Bible is unique. It has its primary focus on the Book, the Bible, which is a collection of 66 books written, under "divine inspiration," by composers of various backgrounds, over a wide span of time. By nature, the Geography of the Bible straddles the domains of both

Geography and the Bible. Its practioners must be well equipped with knowledge in both of these two fields. On the one hand, one must be familiar with the Bible; on the other hand, one must be knowledgeable about the Land. That is to say, one must possess not only the skill of geographic application, but also insights of biblical interpretation.

In addition, knowledge of biblical languages is also important: it will greatly facilitate the research. Furthermore, a good personal knowledge and understanding of the physical and cultural environment of the Bible Land is also necessary. That is to say, biblical geographers should seek opportunities to do field work in the Lands of the Bible. Reading about the Bible and/or the Bible Land does not do justice; "it has to be experienced first-hand."[10]

Having realized the mutual relationship between the Geography and the Bible, it is time for us to do something. On the one hand, Bible-interested geographers should come out of the nutshell, with the vigor of a newly germinated seed, to actively involve in drawing up their potential contribution through teaching and doing research on this "neglected frontier" in geography. On the other hand, the Bible readers should pay increasing attention to what geography can offer. And we should not just talk about the Geography of the Bible, but should also try to foster a positive attitude toward the subject with healthy interests.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE BIBLE

But what really is the Geography of the Bible? What is included in its subject matter? Does the Bible study really need geography? As an academic subject, does the Geography of the Bible have a workable methodology? What other contributions can it make? These are some of the pertinent and legitimate questions.

What is the Geography of the Bible:- Attempts to relate geography and the Bible may be traced back to the end of the last century when George Adam Smith published The Historical Geography of the Holy Land in 1894. Recent interest in the subject began in 1957 when Denis Baly published The Geography of the Bible: A Study in Historical Geography (Harper & Brothers). Other recent publications related to the subject included another volume by Baly, Geography Companion to the Bible (London: Lutterworth) in 1963; Yohanan Aharoni's The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography in 1963;[11] Wycliffe's Historical Geography of Bible Lands edited by Pfeiffer and Vos (Moody Press) in 1967;[12] M. Avi-Yonah's The Holy Land (Baker) in 1966;[13] J. H. Kitchen's Holy Fields (Eerdmans) in 1955; George A. Turner's Historical Geography of the Holy Land (Baker) in 1973; and Baly's revision of 1957 edition in 1974. All of these authors took on a more or less historical-geographical approach, although Baly, a trained geographer, dealt also with geological structure, meteorological phenomena, as well as soil, vegetation, and food. None of these, however, had ever attempted to define what is the Geography of the Bible.

In a paper presented at the 75th Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, this author proposed to define the Geography of the Bible as "the geography that is found in the Bible."[14] The "geography" that is found in the Bible may be categorized as follows: (1) the physical geographic elements that are mentioned in the Bible;[15] (2) the cultural components and/or their expressions that are found in the Bible;[16] (3) the various people, especially the "Chosen People" who are the center of God's attention; and (4) the interplay of the above, that is, the role of these people as they played in their respective physical and cultural environments to give rise to what are known as biblical events. These categories, however, are not separate or distinctive components; rather, they are functionally interrelated.

Thus, the Geography of the Bible is not merely seeking the understanding of how men (especially the "Chosen People") reponded to the call of God in such a geographic setting. It is also about how the people responded to the challenge of such an adverse environment which has often been looked upon as "God's testing ground."[17]

The purpose of the Geography of the Bible then is: (1) to seek proper understanding of the Bible passages that have incorporated in them geographic elements; (2) to explore the "what is where and why" of the biblical events; and (3) to gain proper perspective towards the complexities of the current situation in "the Land of the Bible." The understanding of these and their interconnections requires a knowledge of both the people, the society, and the environment as they are found in the Bible, recorded in the secular history, and buried under the Tel (Tells).

Geography in the Bible Studies:- But are there any specific benefits of including geography in the study of the Bible? Lester Meyer suggested the following.[18] First, Geography distinguishes the Bible from fantasy literature. The Bible deals with this real world. Men and women of the Bible went through the same universal human experience as we do today. Geography helps to bring reality into Bible study. To avoid confusing students in Bible study, Meyer suggested not to use maps of the "Bible Lands" but rather to use maps which also have modern place-names. Second, Geography delivers the Bible from idealization. Illustrations used in Bible teaching in the past often romanticized the biblical world which, in reality, was much the same as ours today. To avoid misconceptions, Meyer suggested the use of illustrations which accurately reflect biblical terrain, descriptions by "professional geographers." To him, geography brings a note of realism to our understanding of the Scripture.

Third, Geography helps to make the biblical story clear. Upon entering the Promised Land and after they had conquered Jericho, Joshua and the Israelites chose not to colonize the lowland, a decision which seemed at first, to be unreasonable. But having known the geographic condition of the Jordan lowland which is both short in water and dangerous to the Canaanite chariotry attack, one would really appreciate the decision of going up to settle the central highland first. There, the existing population was fewer and the city-states were both smaller and scattered.[19] "Thanks to geography," said Meyer, "many things in the Bible that once seemed strange or merely accidental begin to fall into place."

Fourth, Geography adds variety to the Bible study. Much of what we learn and remember comes from seeing, there exists a need to visualize what is being described in the Bible. The actual surroundings in which the biblical drama was enacted may be seen through visual aids. Geography, according to Meyer, is a subject that lends itself especially well to such an approach.

Methodology for the Geography of the Bible:- If the Geography of the Bible is a legitimate academic subject in Geography, does it have a viable methodology? The answer to this question is a definite yes. First, under the grand context of Geography, the Geography of the Bible is subject to the same methodological framework. That is to say, it could be approached systematically as well as chorographically; it may also be approached idiographically or nomothetically.

Systematically, one may study, for instance, the fauna and flora of the Bible; theorize about the location of biblical towns and cities; investigate the military campaigns and battles of the Bible; or one may study the historical meteorological phenomena and climatic conditions and how they might have affected agriculture and food supplies in the biblical time. It is assumed that the

development of settlement patterns, the conduct of military campaigns, and the waging of warfare in Bible times, must be subject, as they are today, to the same governing principles of site and situation, weather and terrain, as well as water and food supplies.

As for the regional studies, one may employ idiographic approach to investigate a specific biblical region or regions in which biblical events took place. Because settlements, which reflect regional characteristics, often bear evidences of sequence of occupation by particular population elements, the regional approach to biblical events is especially relevant. Furthermore, geographic factors in different regions tend to exert different influences on settlements, communication (routes), climate, agriculture, as well as warfare and defense. They all reflect regional elements and, therefore, could be approached regionally.

Second, as the division of academic disciplines (or subject) is not much a matter of differences in content they possess as the set of questions they raise, the Geography of the Bible does raise a specific set of questions. In conducting a specific research, a biblical geographer must ask the following questions. (1) Where was the specific biblical event taken place? (2) What does the Bible really say with respect to a specific biblical event? For example, does the Bible really say that there were three wisemen from Persia who came to visit baby Jesus? (3) What "internal" and "external" evidences are there concerning a biblical event? For example, what biblical and archaeological evidence do we have to support the manner in which the walls of Jericho fell? (4) What geographic principles may be applied toward better understanding a particular biblical passage or a specific biblical event? For instance, King Saul was defeated by the Philistines in that decisive battle on Mt. Gilboa which also cost his life. What geographic principles may help to

understand this event? Did he make mistakes on the choice of terrain or neglect the water supply?

In addition, one may also raise another question: What support from geography do we have to prove or disprove the findings of others as claimed? For example, books such as The Late Great Planet Earth by Hal Lindsey have had questionable success in attracting multitudes to believe that fulfilment of prophecies are found in developments in today's Russia and Iran. "Such popular expositions," according to Professor Yamauchi, "have unfortunately been in part based on obsolete or inadequate [archaeological and geographical] data."[21] Correct approach to historical geography, especially aracheogeography (geography of the antiquity), augmented by archaeological finds may help scholars to become more intelligent discerners of the truth.

Frontiers in the Geography of the Bible:- In a paper presented in 1980, this author signaled out four teaching and research frontiers in Geography of the Bible.[22] First geographic interpretation of biblical passages: examples of this area of research have been elaborated earlier in this paper. Suffice it to say that by expounding upon the geographic phenomena that are allegorically incorporated in the Bible, it throws light on some of the Scriptural "riddles" and aids appreciation of these Bible passages. Second, identification of biblical sites: archaeologists have done a tremendous work in digging up biblical cities in recent years. However, more biblical sites have been identified geographically than archaeologically (though not necessarily by geographers). Geographers with some training in archaeology or in close cooperation with archaeologists can contribute toward the more accurate identification of biblical sites. Few geographers, however, are at present engaged in this endeavor.

Third, help to clear up ambiguity in translation: an example is cited here to illustrate the point. In I Samuel 23:15 where we read:

"David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood" (KJV)

"David was in the wilderness of Ziph at Horesh" (RSV)

Here, the Hebrew word חֹרֶשׁ is rendered as "a wood (forest)" in KJV but as "Horesh (a place)" in RSV. A question may be raised here. Is חֹרֶשׁ a wood or a place name? Which translation is likely to be more appropriate? The verse says that חֹרֶשׁ is "in the midbar of Ziph." The term midbar although is most often translated as "desert," it is best translated as "wasteland" or "wilderness" which is, of course, not necessarily "desert."[23] Now, the midbar of Ziph is located on the parched slope, east of the "lower" Judean Hill (south of Hebron), facing the Dead Sea. The average annual precipitation on this slope is less than 12 inches which could be considered a desert. The slope is on the lee side, and the adiabatic effect will cause the descending air along the slope to increase its aridity. It is therefore, reasonable to assume that the climate in the wilderness of Ziph is indeed desertic. If this is correct, then it is unlikely that there was "a wood" in this part of the world, unless, of course, the region's climate has drastically changed since the biblical time which, from all indications, is unlikely. For this reason, חֹרֶשׁ is better translated as Horesh, the name of a specific place, rather than a wood.

Finally, but not the least, cartography, the unique contribution of geographers remains one of the teaching and research frontiers in the Geography of the Bible. Surprisingly and interestingly enough, most of the biblical atlases currently available have been compiled by biblical scholars, not geographers! They often show inaccuracies, mislocation of places, ignore the significance of terrain, and pay no due attention to the importance of other physical features.[24] Herein lies a real challenge to biblical geographers, especially those who are trained in cartography, to produce a first rate biblical atlas.

Geography of the Bible and World Politics:- The "Promised Land" was not empty at the arrival of the "Children of Israelites" and the "Home Land" was not devoid of people before the twentieth century "return" of the Jews in Disapora; clashes and conflicts therefore are not only unavoidable but also inevitable. Thus, the current conflict between Israel and the Arabs is a historical recurrence and it has also biblical roots back to the time of Abraham. The present feud is indeed within the family.

One of the problems facing the United States in her position of leadership in world politics is that Americans are too emotional and too sentimental. Emotional involvement makes one prone to take sides. On the matter of Arab-Israeli conflict, the sentiment in the United States so far has been overwhelmingly "pro-Israeli" although, in recent years, the "pro-Arab" sentiment is increasing. On a delicate issue such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, a big nation like the United States cannot afford to take sides. In dealing with this issue, a fair and even-handed situation based on a clear and in-depth understanding of the issue is much needed. This is another research frontier which challenges the Geography of the Bible--to look into some possible solutions to this intricate problem in the Middle East today.

From the biblical perspective, this author suggests two possible areas of concern. The first is related to geopacific, the geography of peace. The idea of living together in peace or "peaceful coexistence" is both a historical fact and a biblical principle (Judges 1:21, 29, 32). If the Israelites could live together with the Canaanites, or vise versa in the past, why can't the Israeli and the Arabs today?

The second area of concern is with the right to the land. The current Israeli policy of taking away the land from its Arab citizens is against the principle and the teaching of the Bible. One outstanding passage in the Bible

gives this instruction from the Lord as one reads in Ezekiel 47:13, 22-23: (RSV):

> "Thus says the Lord God: 'These are the boundaries by which you should divide the land for inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel . . . You shall allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the aliens who reside among you and have begotten children among you. They shall be to you as native-born sons of Israel; with you they shall be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel. In whatever tribe the alien resides, there you shall assign him his inheritance, says the Lord God'." (Italic mine)

The above briefly discusses several aspects of teaching and research frontiers in the Geography of the Bible. They are by no means exhaustive. For instance, another aspect that may be included is, for want of a better term, geoprophecy--looking at the prophecies of the Bible from the geographic perspective.[25]

CONCLUSION

The Geography of the Bible is an old subject, but it is one in which geographers are interested only recently. There are a number of areas to which geographers can contribute. The recent trend toward returning to the Bible in America offers biblical geographers both an opportunity and a challenge. The question is who is willing to pick up the enthusiasm and be actively involved in teaching and research in this neglected field?

NOTES AND CITATIONS

1. For example, suing a property owner for negligence to provide adequate safety measure to prevent one's accident on the owner's premise has its biblical origin in Deuteronomy 22:8 where the instruction reads: "When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet [guardrail] for your roof, that you may not bring the guilt of blood upon your house, if any one fall from it." (RSV)

2. A survey of Road Atlas: United States/Canada/Mexico published by Rand McNally reveals several categories of town and city names related to the Bible. (1) Regional names such as Lebanon (KS, IN, DE, etc), Palestine (AK, IL), Canaan (CT), Jordan (MT), Mesopotamia (OH), Jordan Vally (OR); (2) Place names such as Bethel (DE, CT), Timnah (CO), Bethany (IL), Hebron (IN, IL, OH), Mt. Olive (KY, IL), Mt. Carmel (IL), MT. Zion (IL), Goshen (CA, IN, MA), Siloam Spring (AR), Sharon (KS, CT), Smyrna (DE, GA), Carmel (IL), Galatia, Antioch, Joppa, Rome (all in IL), Athens (IL, GA), in addition to what have been mentioned in the text; (3) Tribal names such as Zebulon (KY), Heber (CA, AZ); (4) Personal names such as Lydia (LA), Eunice (NM), Solomon (KS, AZ), Ruth (KY), Adams City (CO), Elizabeth (CO, GA), St. Paul (KY, MN), St. Matthew (KY), Luke (MD), St. John and Rebecca (GA), Salome (AZ); (5) "Outopian" names (Greek, Ou from ouketi, no longer; topian from TOPOS, place) such as Paradise (PA, TX), Eden (GA, ID); (6) Descriptive names such as Salem (KY, MA, IL, IN, OR), Joy (IL), Hope (AR, ID, IN, KS, ND, RI), Faith (NC, SD), Love (county in OK), Truth or Consequence (NM); (6) Figurative and Symbolic names such as Zion (MD, IL), Amana (IA), Trinity (NC, TX), Holy Cross (KY), and (7) Others such as Mission (TX).

3. Paul Fickeler, "Fundamental Questions in the Geography of Religion," in Philip L. Wagner and Marvin W. Mikesell, eds., Readings in Cultural Geography (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 94-117.

4. New American Standard Translation (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1960 and 1977).

5. The term Wadi is used mainly in the region of Sahara and the Arab countries of Southwest Asia. In North and South Americas where Spanish is spoken, the normally dry stream bed is called Arroyo, and in India, it is called Nullah. W. G. Moore, A Dictionary of Geography (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1971), pp. 16, 148, & 224.

6. J. B. Phillips, The New Testament in Modern English (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1958), p. 500.

7. For a vivid description of the emotional tie of the Palestinian with the arrival of these rains, see Denis Baly, The Geography of the Bible, a new and revised edition (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), p. 49.

8. Good News Bible: The Bible in Today's English Version (New York: American Bible Society, 1976).

9. For a very interesting and philosophical discussion on the subject, see Yi-fu Tuan, The Hudrologic Cycle and the Wisdom of God: A Theme in Geo-teleology, University of Toronto Department of Geography Research Publications (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1968).

10. The statement is from Kersten Beckstrom, "Israel: The Way I Saw it, the Way I Felt it," Decision (April 1980), p. 10.

11. The original volume was published in Hebrew in 1962. The English edition was translated by A. F. Rainey and was published by the Westminster Press in the U.S. in 1967. A revised and enlarged English edition was published in 1979 by the same publisher.

12. This publication is noted for the wide extent of the Bible Lands it covers: From Iran to Italy.

13. Avi-Yonah takes on a more historical rather than geographical approach. He tells the story from the Persian Empire to the Arab Conquest, covering a period from the 6th Century BC to the 7th Century AD.

14. Jonathan J. Lu, "The Geography That is Found in the Bible: A Definition of the Geography of the Bible," paper presented at the Special Session: Geography and the Bible, at the 75th Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers (Philadelphia, PA, April 25, 1979).

15. The Bible makes numerous references to the physical elements of the earth and the universe. The mentioning of an expanding universe is especially interesting (Ps. 104:2). For an enlightening discussion of the expanding universe, see James S. Trefil, "Closing in on Creation," Smithsonian (May 1983), pp. 33-51.

16. The Bible also remarks on various cultural components of the land. For example, the Bible forbids the removal of neighbor's landmarks (Deut. 19:14; 27-17; Prov. 22:28); forbids cutting one's own flesh for the dead (Lev. 19:28; Deut. 14:1; cf "Special Correspondence from Jerusalem--Lebanon," Biblical Geography Newsletter, July 1983, pp. 8, 9). Jesus portrayed a wedding custom (Matt. 25:1-13. For an exposition of this passage, see William Barclay, The Gospel of Matthew, pp. 353 ff).

17. See for example, D. Kelly Ogden, "Canaan: God's Testing Ground for the Children of Israel," paper presented at the Special Session: Geography and the Bible of the 76th Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers (Louisville, KY, April 15, 1980).

18. Lester Meyer, "Geography and Bible Study Today," Parish Teacher Annual, Vol. 3 (1979), pp. 7-10.

19. Jonathan J. Lu, "Ai Campaign: Some Geographic Considerations," Biblical Geography Newsletter (July, 1983), pp. 6-7.

20. _____, "Geography of the Bible as an Academic Subject: An Example from the Ai Campaign," paper presented at the Geography Colloquium, University of Northern Iowa (Fall, 1982).

21. Edwin M. Yamauchi, Foes from the Northern Frontier: Invading Hordes from the Russian Steppes (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1982), p. 11.

22. Jonathan J. Lu, "Teaching and Research Frontiers in the Geography of the Bible," paper presented at the Special Session: Geography and the Bible, 76th Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers (Louisville, KY, April 15, 1980).

23. Baly, The Geography of the Bible, Chapter 9, esp. p. 103.

24. For details, see Denis Baly, "The Treatment of Geographical Features in Biblical Maps," The Bible Translator (c 1960), pp. 56-62.

25. The Bible prophecized "a union of great nations from the north country" will arise and against Babylon (Jer. 50:9; cf 50:41); it also prophecized against Gog and Magog (Ezek. 38:1; cf Rev. 20:9). Magog was the land of Gog. As a collective name, Magog is supposed to represent certain Scythian or Tartar tribes. See Samuel Fallows, Ed., The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia and Scriptural Dictionary, Vol. II (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Co., 1910), pp. 722 and 1099. Scythian is a name which occurs only in Col. 3:11. It referred to the tribes north of the Black and Caspian Seas. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 1537-1538. How would the Biblical geographers interpret these prophecies in the light of the current and future events occurring in that part of the world is an interesting question.